

Dear Review Panel Members,

We have two concerns we would like to address regarding the current Canada Post Strategic Review.

The first is the undemocratic nature of this review's methods..

Over and over we hear from our employer that since Canada Post is now a corporation then our one shareholder is the Canadian public. If our one and only shareholder is indeed the Canadian Public, why then is this review consulting what it is referring to as Canada Post's "major stakeholders" and not its owner (the shareholder), the Canadian public?

To suggest that the opportunity for written or online submissions is an opportunity for that owner to express its views is absurd; how many shareholders are asked to merely write in a letter if they feel like it when a fundamental change is being made to the company they own. How many majority shareholders would be treated in this manner.

Further to this, it is becoming quite clear to us that were not our union actively promoting awareness of this review, the general public would be quite ignorant of it.

Our second concern is the possibility of deregulation.

Deregulation has replaced privatization as the new economic buzzword. After years of streamlining Canada Post on a business model it must be clear that the behemoth responsibility of delivering universal service in a country the size and breadth of ours is at best only minimally profitable.

As a public service this should be of little concern to us. In fact all of the profits that Canada Post has handed back to the government have effectively served as an additional tax on postage for the Canadian Public. Paid for by customers, on a public service model this excess revenue should have been returned to the public in terms of improved service, lower prices, or an investment in infrastructure.

Nonetheless, profits being minimal the new alternative is deregulation.

The first argument against deregulation is that it benefits big businesses in urban centres to the detriment of small businesses and individual customers in rural or semi-rural areas. It guts returns in the profitable urban areas and the rest of the country is left without the benefit of what is essentially an internal subsidy to the system. The concept of universal service becomes untenable. This has been the clear result in all deregulated postal systems without a doubt.

The second, very compelling argument, is that since deregulation has proved disastrous in much smaller more densely populated countries than Canada, why experiment in our enormous country using such a model when we already have achieved the second lowest

letter rate in the world under our current structure (the US, similarly, has achieved the lowest rate)?

We beg the review panel, please do not play experimental games with our postal system for the sake of a trend or on the principle that monopolies are by their nature intrinsically bad. If in general the latter is true, be wary of the exceptions to what you may hold as a rule. Canada Post's exclusive privilege serves the public; it is not a money-grabbing monopoly but the means by which the Corporation can truly provide universal service.

In the communities that we serve, the public postal service is a lifeline and an integral part of those communities' infrastructure. In communities that have lost their public post offices or had them privatized, the results are palpable. Were the methods of this review truly consultative you would be hearing their opposition to any option that might result in the removal of more public post offices.

Asking you to weigh these and many other considerations,

Sincerely,

The Port Hawkesbury (Nova Scotia) Local of the
Canadian Union of Postal Workers